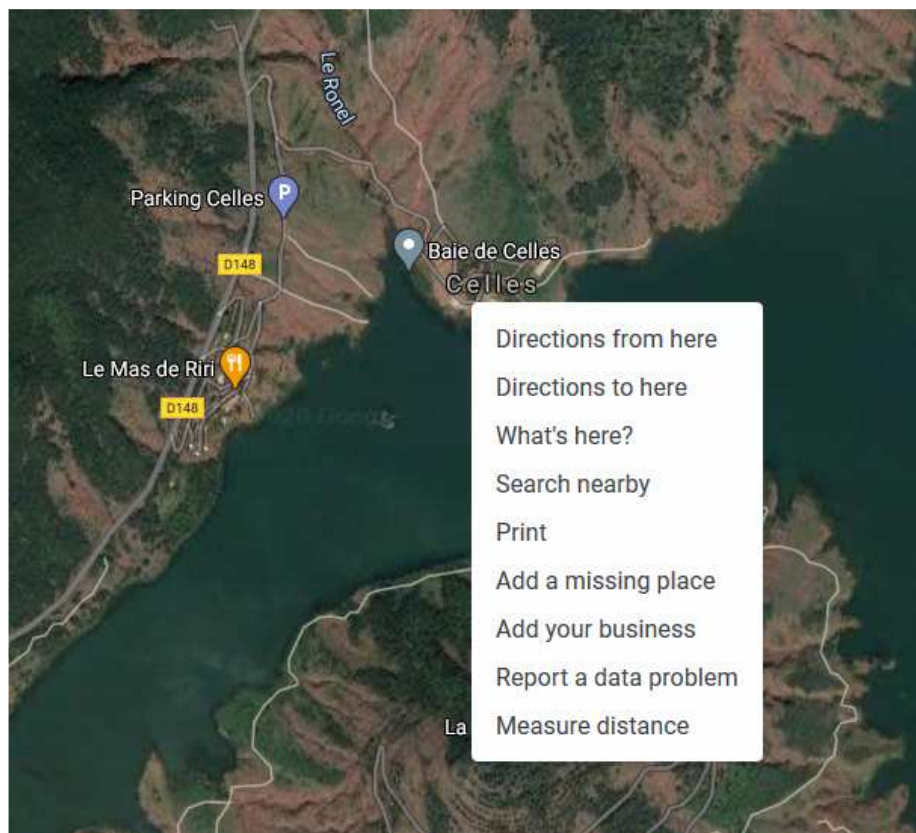


Using Google Maps To Define a PuzzleMap™ Point Clue Location

October 30, 2020

The location at which the popup for a PuzzleMap™ point clue should be displayed is defined by its latitude, longitude and zoom level. These values can be easily obtained from Google Maps as follows:

1. Use the Google search tool and the background maps (street or satellite) to find the best place to locate the point clue popup. This is where the tip of the pointer on the "balloon" will be placed when the clue is selected in PuzzleMap.
2. Right-click on that location and select "What's Here?" from the context menu:



A small window will appear at the very bottom of the screen with some descriptive information and the location coordinates (latitude, longitude) in gray:



3. Click on those coordinates. A red marker will be placed on the map at those coordinates. The left side panel will also open and the map extent will probably change. Copy and save the coordinates that are displayed in the side panel:



Coordinates are displayed in 2 common formats; degrees, minutes, seconds (DMS) and decimal degrees (DD). DMS notation is always D°M'S" with a capital letter indicating the hemisphere to which the coordinate applies (N,S,E or W). Decimal degrees simply expresses degrees as a floating-point number. DD is positive in the Northern and Eastern hemispheres and negative in the Western and Southern hemispheres.

There are 60 minutes in a degree and 60 seconds in a minute. The conversion formula is pretty simple:

$$DD = D + (M / 60) + (S / 3600)$$

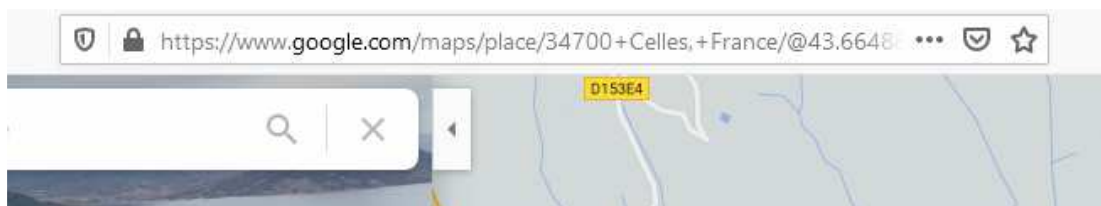
But that's a hassle, so please copy the *decimal* coordinate values! In this example, the values are:

Latitude: **43.661195** Longitude: **3.340662**

4. Zoom level is how "close in" the map should be when the popup is displayed for a point clue on a solved (or "placed") piece. In this situation, PuzzleMap, just like Google Maps, will zoom to that level, and display the summary text with the clue image. The summary should explain the title of the clue and may include links to more information. This is the "reward" for solving a piece -- the clue now makes sense and it hopefully stimulates some curiosity about a place on the map!

So, after finding the location, adjust the map to be at an appropriate scale for displaying the subject of the point clue. If it's a city or a lake, for example, the whole thing should be visible along with enough surrounding area to put it into context. If the clue is about a building, the Zoom Level should probably be much closer.

To obtain the zoom level value from Google Maps, you have to switch to the "Map" background (if you are not using it already). Then copy the URL from the address bar in the browser:



Paste this URL into a text file of some kind. It may be ugly and look something like this:

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/34700+Celles,+France/@43.6648885,3.3371546,14.75z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x12b1614a4dcf9833:0x4078821166aca90!8m2!3d43.661506!4d3.3411209>

Notice that there are coordinates in the URL followed by a number (usually in the teens) followed by a lower-case "z" (shown above in blue). That number is the zoom level. The coordinates always refer to the current center of the map and they change whenever the map is moved. So *beware*, they may not be the same as those captured for the point clue (...just as they are not in this example).

Since the correct coordinates have already been obtained in step #3, only the zoom level is still needed. In this case, it is: **14.75**

That's it! To check that you have done everything correctly, you can assemble a new URL in your text file. It only needs to include the Google Maps address <https://www.google.com/maps/> followed by the @ character, the decimal coordinates for the clue (latitude first), the desired zoom level (all separated by commas) and the little "z."

Now it's reasonably simple and should look like this:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@43.661195,3.340662,14.75z>

Open a new browser tab or window, paste this URL into the address bar and press ENTER. Google Maps should load and display the point location in the center of the screen at the desired zoom level. If that's what happens, you did everything right!